# AMENDMENTS TO THE SPECIFICATION

**Kindly amend the paragraph beginning on page 24, line 24, as follows:**

~~Fig. 3Ais~~ Fig. 3A is a view showing a plasma processing apparatus of a third embodiment of the present invention, where the neighborhood of the outer peripheral edge portion of a substrate is shown enlarged. Fig. 3A shows a structure in which the L-figured ring 10a of Figs. 1A-1C is constructed as a ring 10g which provided on the cathode electrode 6 and has such a construction that can be divided into: an outer side surface covering-portion 10c that has a thickness larger than the thickness of the substrate 8 and has a clearance 42 outwardly of the substrate 8 with respect to the outer peripheral edge portion of the substrate 8; and an upper surface covering-portion 10d that is protruded toward the center portion thereof as compared with the outer side surface covering-portion 10c and has a clearance 41 in the direction of thickness of the substrate 8 with respect to the upper surface of the outer peripheral edge portion of the substrate 8. The upper surface covering-portion 10d covers the upper surface of the outer peripheral edge portion of the substrate 8 and the outer side surface covering-portion 10c covers the outer side surface of the outer peripheral edge portion of the substrate 8.

**Kindly amend the paragraph beginning on page 29, line 19, as follows:**

That is, the upper surface covering-portion 10f of the ring 10h covering the outer peripheral edge portion of the substrate 8 is moved upward to the upper end position by the drive devices ~~22~~ 22.

**Kindly amend the paragraph beginning on page 32, line 9, as follows:**

~~Fig. 5~~ Fig. 6 is a view showing a plasma processing apparatus of a fifth embodiment of the present invention, where the neighborhood of the outer peripheral edge portion of a substrate 8 is shown enlarged taking the second embodiment of Fig. 2A as an example. When an upper surface covering-portion 10k of a ring 10j ranging from the upper surface of the substrate 8 to the lower surface of the substrate 8 is squarely viewed, the ring 10i in the region covering the outer peripheral edge of the substrate 8 inwardly of the upper surface of the substrate 8 has ~~a the~~ an upper surface covering-portion 10k tapered so as to increase the thickness in a direction of thickness from an innermost edge portion of the upper surface covering-portion 10k outwardly of the upper surface covering-portion 10k with respect to the lower surface of the upper surface covering-portion 10k. Normally, the material that forms the ring 10j preferably is an insulating material of ceramic, Duracon (Registered Trademark), quartz, or the like, which is stable even in a plasma, whereas these are materials having brittleness. Therefore, when the ring inner edge thickness d3 of the upper surface covering-portion 10k is set not greater than 3 mm, it is very highly possible that the material is damaged during maintenance, mounting, and dismounting of the ring 10j or in a similar case with taking the practical use into consideration. Therefore, the thickness must be secured in terms of strength. However, by providing the configuration tapered in the direction of thickness as described hereinabove, the impedance due to the change in the configuration of the ring thickness can also be corrected. This arrangement enables the generation of an optimum uniform electric field and the restraint of the phenomenon of the excessive increase of the plasma sheath in the neighborhood of the outer peripheral edge portion of the substrate 8. For this reason, the variation of the plasma processing characteristic in the outer peripheral edge portion of the substrate 8 can be restrained, and uniform plasma processing can be achieved. It is to be noted that the taper angle θ of the upper surface covering-portion 10k of the ring 10j preferably is $10^0$ to $30^\circ$ taking the strength of the ring inner edge portion of the upper surface covering-portion 10k into consideration.